

SENATE RESOLUTION 14

By Tate

A RESOLUTION to approve the University of Memphis's redirection of funds from the Lillian and Morrie Moss Chair of Excellence in English Poetry to establish a Chair of Excellence in Computer Science.

WHEREAS, in 1985, the Tennessee General Assembly established the Chairs of Excellence Endowment Fund, an irrevocable trust fund for the sole purpose of funding the chairs of excellence programs at the University of Tennessee and Tennessee Board of Regents institutions; and

WHEREAS, in 1987, the University of Memphis established the Lillian and Morrie Moss Chair of Excellence in English Poetry (Chair Number 20411) with the hope that it would attract top academic talent to help build the University's graduate program in creative writing; and

WHEREAS, due to the lagging student demand for advanced degrees in creative writing and the fact that the University does not offer a doctoral degree in creative writing, the University has had difficulty locating and retaining suitable candidates for the Chair, resulting in the Chair of Excellence in English Poetry being vacant since 2012; and

WHEREAS, the University of Memphis has determined that the endowment funds supporting this chair would be better used to support research and educational excellence in the area of Computer Science, an area of study demonstrating both current and future opportunities for research and academic program growth; and

WHEREAS, there is no existing Chair of Excellence in Computer Science in the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the Moss Chair of Excellence was created through support from the University of Memphis Foundation, and the President and the Executive Director of the

Foundation have endorsed the redirection of the funds to the Chair of Excellence in Computer Science in lieu of the original donors, who are both deceased; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission has reviewed the University's proposal and determined that the redirection of these funds to a Chair of Excellence in Computer Science at the University of Memphis will have significant impact on establishing the University as a national leader in computer science research and has requested that this proposal be reviewed by the appropriate committees of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Board of Regents has agreed to the redirection of the funds from the Chair of Excellence in English Poetry to the establishment of a Chair of Excellence in Computer Science; and

WHEREAS, the requirements for modification of the purpose of a Chair of Excellence prescribed in Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-7-503(b) have been satisfied; and

WHEREAS, according to Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-7-503(c), this request has been reviewed and recommended by the appropriate committee of the Senate; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that the endowment funds previously directed to the Lillian and Morrie Moss Chair of Excellence in English Poetry at the University of Memphis be redirected to the establishment and ongoing support of a Chair of Excellence in Computer Science at the University of Memphis.